

Milan was early celebrated for its gold thread and beautifully wrought laces of that material.

"Les galons, passements et broderies, en or et en argent de Milan," says Savary,⁵⁰ were once celebrated.

Lalande, who writes some years later, adds, the laces formerly were an object of commerce to the city, now they only fabricate those of an inferior quality.⁵¹

Much was consumed by the Lombard peasants, the better sorts serving for ruffles of moderate price.⁵² So opulent are the citizens, says a writer of the same epoch, that the lowest mechanics, blacksmiths and shoemakers, appear in gold stuff coats with ruffles of the finest point.⁵³

And when, in 1767, the Auvergne lace-makers petition for an exemption from the export duty on their fabrics, they state as a ground, that the duty prevents them from competing abroad, especially at Cadiz, with the lace-makers of Piedmont, the Milanais, and Imperial Flanders. Milan must therefore have made lace extensively to a late period.

Fig. 27 is a specimen of what is termed old Milan point (reticella) from the convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie, in that city.

In the district of Cantu, near Lake Como, the making of white and black pillow lace gives employment to many thousands of women. The "torchon" lace of the country is original, and in much request with the peasantry.

In the underground chapel of San Carlo Borromeo, in Milan cathedral, are preserved twenty six "camicie" trimmed with flounces of the richest point, all more or less splendid, and worked in the convents of the city, but many of the contents of this sumptuous wardrobe have rotted away from the effects of the damp atmosphere.

FLORENCE.

Of Florence and its products we know but little, though the Elegy of its poet Firenzuola proves that ladies made the raised

mentiers, etc., de Paris, confirmez sur les anciens Statuts du 23 mars 1558. Paris, 1719."

⁵⁰ "Grand Dictionnaire Universel du Commerce," 1723.

⁵¹ "Voyage en Italie," 1765.

⁵² Peuchet (J.), "Dictionnaire Universel de la Géographie Commercante." Paris, An VII. = 1799.

⁵³ "Letters from Italy," by a Lady. 1770.